



State of Tennessee Department of Children's Services

Administrative Policies and Procedures: 16.10 - BA

Subject: Foster Home Capacity

Supersedes: DCS 16.10, 09/15/01

Local Policy: No

Local Procedures: No

Training Required: No

Applicable Practice Model Standard(s): Yes

Approved by:

Effective date: 07/01/00

Revision date: 01/01/04

Application

To All Department of Children's Services Foster Parents, Program Operations Assistant Commissioners, Regional Administrators, Team Coordinators, Team Leaders and Case Managers

Authority: TCA 71-3-501; 37-5-106

Policy

Foster families shall not have more than three (3) foster children in their home or a total of six (6) children including the foster family's natural and/or adopted children. No placement shall result in there being more than three (3) children (natural, foster, or adopted) under the age of three years (3) residing in a foster home. These restrictions do not apply to sibling groups and all efforts shall be made to keep sibling groups together.

Procedures

A. Capacity of foster home

1. The total number of children that the foster family is approved to care for shall be documented in the foster parent(s) home study.
2. Any change in capacity will not be considered until a mutual foster home reassessment is completed.
3. There may be legitimate circumstances where it is in the best interest of a child that the number of children placed in a home exceeds three (3).

B. Exceptions

1. When circumstances arise where the capacity needs to exceed as listed above, the Regional Administrator is allowed to make an exception on an individual basis.
2. If it is determined that it is in the child's best interest for such a placement to be made, the Regional Administrator shall ensure that documentation of the decision is included in the child's case file, as well as the foster home file. This type exception shall not be made in more than ten percent (10%) of all placements made annually in each grand region.
3. All exceptions made by the Regional Administrators shall be documented in a log, which contains the detailed reasons justifying the exception.
4. The only other exception to the limits referenced in this policy shall be in those instances in which the placement of a sibling group in a foster home with no other children in the home would exceed these limits.
5. Siblings who enter placement at or near the same time shall be placed together, unless doing so is harmful to one or more of the siblings, one of the siblings has exceptional needs that can only be met in a specialized program or facility, or the size of the sibling group makes such placement impractical notwithstanding diligent efforts to place the group together.
6. If a sibling group is separated at the initial placement, the case manager shall make immediate efforts to locate or recruit a family in whose home the siblings can be reunited. These efforts shall be documented in case recordings in TN Kids.

Forms

None

Collateral Documents

None

Standards

DCS Practice Model Standard- 6-502A

DCS Practice Model Standard- 6-511C

This Is A Brian A. Policy and May Not Be Changed Without Prior Authorization